

BIOPHILIA

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATING WILD NATURE INTO CONTEMPORARY CITIES

Biophilia is a term coined by E. O Wilson, to define man's inherent affiliation for nature. Although the causes for this affiliation is contested, it is evident that a connection to the natural world has a positive impact on mental and physical wellbeing. Throughout history, man has domesticated nature in cities, and have avoided wild nature, despite the positive impacts that wild nature has.



FIG. 1 THE HIGH LINE, NEW YORK

As the migration from rural areas to cities continues to escalate, the topic of biophilia becomes increasingly relevant. While the benefits of a connection to the natural world, specifically a wild natural world, are known, the majority of architects neglect to take this into consideration when designing in contemporary cities. Thus, contemporary cities lack a genuine connection to the natural environment, which has a negative effect on our wellbeing, leading to an increase in stress, physical ailments, and mental illness.

By using George Monbiot's concept of rewilding, this research will put forward a proposal which examines how rewilding

the city centre of Norwich can improve the cities wellbeing. Currently, while there is an abundance of domesticated nature (nature that requires human intervention), there is a general lack of wild nature in cities. As studies have shown that a connection to wild nature has a positive impact on wellbeing, it can be concluded that the introduction of wild nature would have positive effects on physical and mental health.



FIG. 2 PROPOSED REWILDING ELEVATION

From this proposal, it is made evident that there is a requirement for some level of domestication of nature in cities, otherwise the city cannot function. However, by using reintroducing native plants, and allowing ecosystems to self-organise, without human intervention, wild habitats can exist in cities.



FIG. 3 PROPOSED REWILDING PERSPECTIVE